

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) An isolated nucleic acid comprising any one of the following:
  - (a) a nucleic acid sequence encoding the a polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 2 or the complement of said nucleic acid sequence;
  - (b) a nucleic acid sequence at least 90% identical to the nucleic acid sequence of (a) above;
  - (c) a nucleic acid encoding a polypeptide wherein the polypeptide has conservative amino acid substitutions to the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 2; or
  - (d) a fragment of the nucleic acid sequence of (a), (b) or (c) above wherein the fragment comprises at least 20 nucleotides.
2. (Original) The nucleic acid of claim 1, wherein said nucleic acid is selected from the group consisting of DNA and RNA.
3. (Currently Amended) The nucleic acid of claim 1, wherein said An isolated nucleic acid comprising comprises an open reading frame that encodes a mature polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 2 or its complement or a mutant or variant thereof.
4. (Currently Amended) The nucleic acid of claim 1, wherein said An isolated nucleic acid comprising comprises a nucleic acid sequence which is SEQ ID NO: 1 or its complement.
5. (Currently Amended) The nucleic acid of claim 3 wherein said nucleic acid encodes amino acids 23-170 a mature form of the polypeptide comprising an amino acid of SEQ ID NO: 2.
6. (Currently Amended) The nucleic acid of claim 4 wherein said An isolated nucleic acid encoding encodes a polypeptide, wherein said polypeptide has a single conservative amino acid substitution relative to the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 2, or its complement comprising an amino acid of SEQ ID NO: 2, a mutant or variant thereof.
7. (Currently Amended) An isolated nucleic acid oligonucleotide sequence that is complementary to and hybridizes under stringent conditions with the nucleic acid of claim 1, wherein said stringent conditions comprise hybridization in a high salt buffer comprising 6X SSC, 50 mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.5), 1 mM EDTA, 0.02% PVP, 0.02% Ficoll, 0.02% BSA, and 500 mg/ml denatured salmon sperm DNA at 65°C.

8. (Currently Amended) An isolated nucleic acid that hybridizes under stringent conditions with the nucleic acid ~~The oligonucleotide sequence of claim 7 that is complementary to at least a portion of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1, wherein said stringent conditions comprise hybridization in a high salt buffer comprising 6X SSC, 50 mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.5), 1 mM EDTA, 0.02% PVP, 0.02% Ficoll, 0.02% BSA, and 500 mg/ml denatured salmon sperm DNA at 65°C.~~
9. (Canceled).
10. (Original) A vector comprising the nucleic acid of claim 1.
11. (Original) A cell comprising the vector of claim 10.
12. (Currently Amended) The cell of claim 11 wherein said cell is a prokaryotic or eukaryotic cell ~~comprising the nucleic acid sequence which is SEQ ID NO: 1, its complement, or a mutant or a variant thereof.~~
13. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising the nucleic acid of claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.
14. (Amended herein). A process for producing a polypeptide ~~encoded by the nucleic acid of claim 1~~, said process comprising:
  - a) providing the cell of claim 11;
  - b) culturing said cell under conditions sufficient to express said polypeptide; and
  - c) recovering said polypeptide,  
thereby producing said polypeptide.
15. (Original) The process of claim 14 wherein said cell is a prokaryotic or eukaryotic cell.
16. (Canceled).
17. (Canceled).